

## IOWA GREAT PLACES APPLICATION GUIDELINES

These application guidelines refer to the Fiscal Year (FY) 2014 Iowa Great Places application and provide guidance to applicants on completing and submitting an application, the application and funding process, and review criteria. The application guidelines also create transparency for a competitive process that is both fair and accountable.

For additional program information and resources, visit [www.iowagreatplaces.gov](http://www.iowagreatplaces.gov).

## APPLICATION PROCESS SUMMARY & DESIGNATION

---

The Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs and Iowa Great Places Citizens' Advisory Board invite eligible lead applicants to submit an application for competitive review during the FY2014 round. By submitting an application, a [lead applicant](#) acknowledges that it seeks both designation as an Iowa Great Place, on behalf of an Iowa neighborhood, district, community or region, and grant funding to support related [eligible projects](#). Designation as an Iowa Great Place remains in effect beyond the [funding period](#).

### Submission Overview

Each Great Place lead applicant may submit one application. Completed applications and support material files can only be submitted online and must be received by 4:30 pm on January 15, 2014 to be considered. Applicants should refer to the [Submission Instructions](#) for details on submitting the application and support material files.

Mailed or hand-delivered applications and any additional materials sent separately from the online application will not be accepted or included in evaluation of the application. All application materials, including photographs, become the property of Iowa Great Places and may be reproduced by Iowa Great Places without additional permission; appropriate credit will be given for any such use.

Neither an invitation to apply nor submission of an application guarantees a lead applicant designation as an Iowa Great Place, a minimum funding level or funding awarded beyond the FY2014 round. Furthermore, designation as an Iowa Great Place does not guarantee a minimum funding level or funding awarded beyond the FY2014 round.

### Contracts

The submission of an application does not in any way constitute a contract between the applicant and the State of Iowa. Applicants awarded the Iowa Great Place designation and grant funding will, at that time, enter into a signed grant agreement and contract with the State of Iowa.

## TIMELINE

---

### Deadline for Online Submission of Application and Support Material Files

January 15, 2014, 4:30 PM

### Finalist Site Visits

March - April 2014

### Notification of Designation and Funding Award

April 30, 2014

## CONTACT

---

Please direct all inquiries to Iowa Great Places Program Coordinator:

David Schmitz  
Iowa Arts Council, a division of the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs  
[david.schmitz2@iowa.gov](mailto:david.schmitz2@iowa.gov)  
515-242-6195

## ELIGIBILITY

---

### Eligible Lead Applicants

Determination of a lead applicant's initial eligibility for the FY2014 round was made based on submission of a Letter of Intent to apply. Only lead applicants determined to be eligible and extended an invitation to apply may submit an application (refer to [Request for Letters of Intent](#) for applicant eligibility criteria). Unsolicited applications will not be accepted or eligible for funding.

### Eligible Projects

Proposed project(s) for which a lead applicant seeks grant funding must primarily involve the creation or renovation of [vertical infrastructure](#).

Great Places funds can only be applied toward vertical infrastructure that is expected to be maintained for a minimum of 20 years and must be documented annually through submission of a certificate of insurance to the State of Iowa. Plans for maintenance and management of vertical infrastructure constructed with Great Places funding should be addressed in Section E. Project Implementation of the application.

Examples of eligible projects include cultural facilities and amenities, outdoor sculpture and public art, building rehabilitation, way-finding signage, mixed use developments, streetscape enhancements, and development of trails and parks.

### Eligible Project Activities

Some or all project activities related to the proposed project(s) for which you seek grant funding must begin (referred to as Project Start Date) during FY2014 (July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014).

#### Types of Eligible Project Activities

- Land acquisition
- Construction
- Major renovation and repair of buildings or appurtenant structures
- Site development
- Park, trail, or permanent design exhibits

#### Types of Ineligible Project Activities

- Routine, reoccurring maintenance
- Operational expenses
- Ongoing utilities
- Lease of a building or appurtenant structures without a lease-purchase agreement
- Stand-alone planning and design phase of project\*

\*Stand-alone planning and design projects and project phases are considered ineligible; however, Great Places funds may be used for engineering and other professional design work associated with the final stages of infrastructure projects, provided that they are applied to projects that will actually be built during the funding period. Applications that involve planning or design work may be subject to additional review.

Questions concerning the eligibility of project activities should be directed to Great Places staff prior to submission of an application.

## FUNDING

---

### Request Amount

The Iowa Legislature has authorized \$1 million dollars for Iowa Great Places to be awarded during the FY2014 (July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014) grant round. Iowa Great Places does not specify a request amount range for projects; grant awards will be made on a case-by-case basis. From FY2006-FY2013, Iowa Great Places made grant awards for individual projects ranging from \$3,000 to \$571,000. The average grant award for a project was \$154,000 and the median grant was \$90,000.

### Funding Period

Upon receiving the Iowa Great Places designation and entering into an authorized agreement with the State of Iowa, lead applicants will receive grant funds on a reimbursement basis (after expenses have been incurred) for eligible project activities submitted and approved in the final agreement. All project activities and incurred expenses must occur within three (3) consecutive years from the time that the Iowa Great Places designation is announced to be eligible for reimbursement.

## **BUDGET & MATCH FUNDS**

---

Budgets must demonstrate that diverse sources of funding, or [match funds](#), have been secured or are anticipated for the project(s) for which the lead applicant seeks funding. Include all available funds and funding sources for the project(s) in the budget, even if exceeding the required match, to demonstrate that sufficient funds exist to complete the project(s).

Prior to completing Section J. Budget of the application, refer to the [Glossary](#) for definitions of expense categories and expense types.

### **Minimum Match Requirement**

- Up to one-half (50%) of the total project cost may be requested from Iowa Great Places. This means that for every \$1 of grant funding requested, \$0.50 of applicant match is required.
- Applicants may overmatch the total requested grant amount.
- Of the applicant match amount, at least 75% must be cash; up to 25% may be obtained from [in-kind sources](#).
- All cash or in-kind match must be a legitimate part of the proposed project and must be expended within the funding period.
- While the minimum match requirement is 50%, competitive proposals will demonstrate a greater match, indicating broad-based community support for their project(s). Competitive proposals will demonstrate that public funding sources have been adequately leveraged to obtain private dollars.

### **Match Funds: Secured or Anticipated**

Matching dollars must be secured; either your organization has been notified of a grant award or has the money on hand. Anticipated funds will only be counted as match if it is coming from an individual or organization that has offered the award contingent on receiving a Great Places grant. Should this situation arise, please attach a letter from the entity clearly stating this contingency and the award amount.

### **State Dollar Match**

Grant awards secured from any State agency for the same project(s) may be counted as match for Great Places funds. However, funds used as a match for other State agency grants cannot be counted toward the Great Places minimum match requirement.

### **In-Kind Match:**

When listing the value of in-kind contributions, please explain how this value was achieved. For donated items, please use the retail value in your area. If the donated item is labor, either from personnel time directly spent on the project or contractor or consultant fees, please list the per hour wage used to calculate the value. Please use prevailing wages for your area.

## **REVIEW PROCESS**

---

Applications will be reviewed by staff for completion, eligibility and adherence to published guidelines. Eligible applications will be referred to a competitive review by the Iowa Great Places Citizens' Advisory Board. Board members will use the [Scoring Rubric](#) to score each application on its own merits. Reviewers will have the option of recommending conditional funding of an application or project(s); for instance, if a business plan has not been completed and seems prudent, reviewers may suggest conditional funding upon receipt and review of a business plan.

Applications must meet a minimum score to be considered for funding; however, there is no score at which an application will automatically qualify for funding or minimum number of funded applications. It is possible that an application surpassing the minimum score will not be funded. Funding recommendations by the Iowa Great Places Citizens' Advisory Board will be submitted to the Department of Cultural Affairs Director who will have final approval of all grant awards. All applicants will be notified of their status by April 30, 2014 and will receive feedback on their applications.

### **Rights Reserved**

Iowa Great Places reserves the right to reject, in whole or in part, any or all applications for reasons including: the applicant's failure to respond to Iowa Great Places' request for additional information, documents, or references; failure to include any required support materials with the application; and failure to deliver the application by the stated deadline. Iowa Great Places will not provide assistance if it is determined any representation, warranty, or statement made in connection with this application is incorrect, false, misleading or erroneous in any material respect. As soon as an application is submitted, the Department of Cultural Affairs reserves the right to investigate any information provided.

## **SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS**

---

All materials must be uploaded and submitted [online](#) and received by 4:30 pm on January 15, 2014.

### **1. Application**

A completed application must be saved digitally as a PDF file and uploaded via the [online submission form](#).

### **2. Support Material Files**

Prior to completing section K. Support Material Files of the application form, refer to the requirements and instructions:

Requirements:

- Support material files must be current and relate directly to the proposal.
- Documents must be saved digitally as PDF or MS Word (.doc) files.
- Photographic material must be saved as PDF or JPG files.
- Support material files must be uploaded and submitted via the [online submission form](#).

Instructions:

#### **2.1 Applicant's Choice**

Submit up to five (5) applicant's choice materials. This can be anything deemed appropriate and helpful to reviewers, such as a community visioning plan, architectural renderings, design concepts, photographs of the property or site acquired or sought, press clippings, or a business plan. Web links and additional narrative and/or citation pages will not be accepted as support materials. Please do not submit bids or estimates at this time.

#### **2.2 Local Support**

Submit up to five (5) documents indicating local support for the application and proposed project(s). Local support may be demonstrated by:

- an official resolution of support approved by a city council or local government (including if the same entity serves as the lead applicant)
- letters of endorsement from local civic organizations, public officials, or other key stakeholders
- documentation from any public forums in which the proposed application was discussed (e.g. city council meeting minutes)
- letters of financial commitment to the project(s), which should state the name of the contributing organization, the amount of funds, and the date funds will be committed

Any known opposition to a proposed project should be acknowledged and documented, including an explanation of what is being done to address those concerns.

### **3. Documentation Files**

Prior to completing section L. Documentation Files of the application form, refer to the requirements and instructions:

Requirements

- Documentation files must be current and accurate.
- Documentation files must be saved digitally as PDF or MS Word (.doc) files.
- Documentation files must be uploaded and submitted via the [online submission form](#).

Instructions

#### **3.1 Lead Applicant Eligibility**

If applicable, submit documentation confirming:

- proof of 501(c)3 nonprofit status
- existing 28E Agreement

#### **3.2 Financial Capacity**

Submit documentation establishing the lead applicant's financial capacity:

- an audited financial statement for the lead applicant's most recent fiscal year.

## SCORING RUBRIC

Panelists will use the Great Places Scoring Rubric to evaluate grant applications. Each section has criteria and corresponding point values to ensure a fair review process. The rubric is on a scale of 50 points.

<b>B. LEAD APPLICANT PROFILE: Up to 3 Points</b>		
<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
Lead applicant demonstrates exceptional organizational capacity through high quality programming and services that clearly advance its mission and serve its target population. Lead applicant demonstrates a strong record of progress through relevant notable achievements and strategic priorities.	Lead applicant demonstrates organizational capacity through programming and services that support its mission and target population. Relevant notable achievements and strategic priorities are identified.	Lead applicant's organizational capacity is unclear. Programming and services are limited, unclear or do not support its mission or serve its target population. Relevant notable achievements or strategic priorities are not identified.

<b>C. VISION PLAN: Up to 12 Points</b>		
<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
Vision plan strongly exemplifies bold thought and innovation.	Vision plan addresses bold thought and innovation.	Vision plan does not represent bold thought and innovation.
<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
Vision plan clearly encourages creativity and entrepreneurship.	Vision plan addresses creativity and entrepreneurship.	Vision plan does not encourage creative and entrepreneurship.
<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
Vision plan clearly fosters a sense of identity by cultivating the unique and authentic qualities of place.	Vision plan addresses a sense of place and identity	Vision plan inadequately addresses a sense of place and identity.
<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
Vision plan will clearly have a transformative impact on community vitality and quality of life.	Vision plan may have a transformative impact on community vitality and quality of life.	Vision plan will not have a transformative impact on community vitality and quality of life.

<b>D. PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Up to 9 Points</b>		
<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
Goals of the proposed project(s) are exemplary and well defined.	Goals of the proposed project(s) are satisfactory and identified.	Goals of the proposed project(s) are inadequate and unclear.
<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
Project(s) are clearly integrated with the vision plan and set of strategies.	Project(s) address the vision plan and strategies.	Project(s) relationship to the vision plan and identified strategies is unclear.
<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
Project(s) will significantly develop diverse local and regional assets.	Project(s) will develop at least one local or regional asset.	Project(s) does not develop local or regional assets.

<b>E. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION: Up to 3 Points</b>		
<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
Confident the project(s) will be successfully realized through a strong plan of action supported by measurable implementation objectives and a clear timeline of activities. Project location(s) is ideal as demonstrated by clear, relevant criteria and a well-defined process is in place for acquisition of land, construction, major renovation and repair, site development, and/or permanent installments.	Project(s) is achievable through identified plan of action supported by implementation objectives and a timeline of activities. Project location(s) is practical as demonstrated by criteria and a process is in place for acquisition of land, construction, major renovation and repair, site development, and/or permanent installments.	Concerns about project(s) achievability. Plan of action, implementation objectives and timeline of activities are inadequate and unclear. Rationale for project location(s) is unclear. Criteria and process are not in place for acquisition of land, construction, major renovation and repair, site development, and/or permanent installments.

<b>F. PUBLIC ACCESS: Up to 3 Points</b>		
<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
Target population is well-defined and relevance to the project(s) evident. Project(s) will be highly accessible due to exemplary plans to disseminate and market project(s) to target population.	Target population is identified. Plans to disseminate and market project(s) to target population are satisfactory.	Target population is unclear or not identified. Plans to disseminate and market project(s) to target population are inadequate.

<b>G. PROJECT PARTNERS: Up to 3 Points</b>		
<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
Project(s) is supported by multiple, diverse partners. Key partner roles and responsibilities are well defined and will enhance the project(s).	Project(s) is supported by partners. Key partner roles and responsibilities are identified	Project(s) is supported by minimal partners. Key partner roles and responsibilities are unclear or not identified.

<b>H. PROJECT EVALUATION: Up to 3 Points</b>		
<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
Project(s) utilizes strong methods and measurements to analyze achievement of goals and implementation objectives. Evaluation results will clearly enhance and sustain the future maintenance and management of the project(s).	Project(s) utilizes methods and measurements to analyze achievement of goals and implementation objectives. Evaluation results may sustain the future maintenance and management of the project(s).	Methods and measurements to analyze achievement goals and implementation objectives are unclear or not identified. Evaluation results will not impact the future maintenance and management of the project(s).

<b>I. PROJECT PRIORITIZATION: Up to 3 Points</b>		
<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
Prioritization of projects is well-defined; selected projects reflect a clear consensus, sense of timing, and significant momentum.	Prioritization of projects is addressed; selected projects reflect some degree of consensus, sense of timing and momentum.	Prioritization of projects is inadequately addressed; selected projects reflect no clear consensus, sense of timing or momentum.

<b>J. BUDGET: Up to 3 Points</b>		
<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
Grant request, cash match and in-kind match are clear and highly relevant to project(s). Project(s) leverages diverse sources of match that are well-defined.	Grant request, cash match and in-kind match are identified. Project(s) leverages sources of match.	Grant request, cash match and in-kind match are unclear. Project(s) does not leverage diverse sources of match..

<b>K. SUPPORT MATERIAL: Up to 6 Points</b>		
<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
Applicant's choice material is highly relevant to the project(s), of high quality and clearly supports the project's excellence.	Applicant's choice material is relevant to the project(s) and of average quality.	Applicant's choice material is not relevant to the project(s), of poor quality and does not support the project's excellence.
<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
Local support material is highly relevant to the project(s), of high quality and clearly supports the project's excellence.	Local support material is relevant to the project(s) and of average quality.	Local support material is not relevant to the project(s), of poor quality and does not support the project's excellence.
<b>GRANTSMANSHIP: Up to 2 Points</b>		
<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
Overall, the application is clear, concise and well-composed.	Overall, the application is clear, containing minimal grammatical errors.	Overall, application is unclear, poorly composed and/or contains multiple grammatical errors.

## **GLOSSARY**

---

(\$) indicates definition when used as a budget item

(A) indicates local and regional asset type

### **Acquisition (\$)**

an expense category that includes any eligible budget item or project cost that relates directly to the purchase of a building, site, or land

### **Arts and Culture (A)**

local and regional assets in Arts and Culture could include cultural attractions and amenities, such as museums, libraries, and arts centers; a concentration of artists or arts-related occupations and industries; or existing arts and cultural resources, such as local arts councils, historical societies and organizations, and arts, cultural and entertainment districts.

### **Authorized Official**

the individual legally obligated to the agreement

### **Built Environment (A)**

local and regional assets in Built Environment could include physical infrastructure in place or currently under development, such as buildings, trails, parks, and bridges.

### **Business Development (A)**

local and regional assets in Business Development could include a business climate that is conducive to business starts, expansions or relocations; existing programs or initiatives that assist businesses; or a specialized workforce or industry currently in place.

### **Capital Project**

a long-term investment made in order to build upon, add or improve on a capital-intensive project

### **Cash Match (\$)**

actual cash contributed to the project by the applicant or other funding sources

### **Construction (\$)**

an expense category that includes any eligible budget item or project cost that relates directly to the physical construction or renovation and repair of buildings or appurtenant structures, including materials and equipment consumed by the project

### **Design (\$)**

an expense category that includes any eligible budget item or project cost that relates to professional design, engineering, or architectural work associated with infrastructure projects that will actually be built (excludes planning activities)

### **Diversity (A)**

local and regional assets in Diversity may relate to the inclusion and interaction of people from varied economic and social backgrounds; an identified population that is diverse, as defined by varying age, creed, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity; or existing programs or initiatives that support diversity.

### **Eligible Application**

an application that adheres to guidelines and will be reviewed by a panel

### **End Date**

the final date of fiscal and program activity for which funding is requested

### **Entrepreneurial Incentives**

local and regional assets in Entrepreneurial Incentives could include a business climate that is supportive of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial activity; a high concentration of entrepreneurs or entrepreneurial activity; or programs or initiatives that support entrepreneurs.



**Expenses (\$)**

all costs associated with the project

**Fiscal Agent**

an organization that meets the definition of applicant and that administers grant funds to an organization which has not yet received its tax-exempt status

**Full-time Employee**

an individual employed in a permanent position for at least 30 hours per week, does not include consultants, contract workers, independent contractors, persons whose positions are temporary or time-limited as a condition of employment

**Full-time Position**

a permanent position employing an individual for at least 30 hours per week, does not include consultants, contract workers, independent contractors, or positions that are temporary or time-limited as a condition of employment

**Grantee**

an applicant receiving a grant from the department

**Grant Request (\$)**

the total amount of program or project cost requested by the applicant from Iowa Great Places

**Great Place Designee**

the community, region, neighborhood, or district that the lead applicant is seeking the Iowa Great Place designation on behalf of

**Historic Fabric (Historic Properties) (A)**

local and regional assets in Historic Fabric or Historic Properties primarily refers to buildings, structures or sites that have been deemed historically significant to Iowa, as evidenced by local, state, or national recognition as such, but may also include the presence of organizations (historical societies or museums) dedicated to preserving the area's history or a concentration of historic points of interest.

**Housing Options (A)**

local and regional assets in Housing Options could include the presence of varied types of housing; accessibility of housing to those of varied socio-economic status; and housing that is zoned for mixed-use or live-work tenants.

**In-kind Match (\$)**

donated goods or services contributed to the project by the applicant or other sources

**Lead Applicant**

the designated grantee should the project(s) be awarded funding and will be subject to grant reporting requirements. Eligible types of lead applicants include nonprofit organizations incorporated in Iowa that have federal tax-exempt status; local and county government; tribal government in Iowa; municipal agencies with 28E agreements; and previously unfunded Iowa Great Places applicants.

**Local and Regional Assets**

local and regional assets are strengths that are already in place or inherent to your community and, as such, differ from assets that must be transferred from or modeled on another community or regional asset.

**Match Funds (\$)**

the project cost which shall be provided by the applicant either in kind or in cash

**Natural Environment (A)**

a local and regional asset in Natural Environment could refer to a river, lake, green or open space, or other natural or geographic feature that is naturally created.

**Other (\$)**

an expense category that includes any eligible budget item or project cost not readily identified with another expense category

**Professional Fees (\$)**

expenses related to non-personnel, independent contractor, and consulting time specifically dedicated to the project, including any business, organization or individual providing services to the project

**Retail Amenities (A)**

local and regional assets in Retail Amenities could include the presence of varied options for shopping and purchasing goods and services; the presence of a high-traffic area with a high concentration of retail shops; or an environment that supports local retail activity.

**Target Population**

the identified community or region that your project(s) will primarily serve

**Total Project Budget (\$)**

the sum of all budget items or project costs described for the project for which you are seeking funding

**Vertical Infrastructure**

per Iowa Code section 8.57(6) (c): land acquisition and construction, major renovation and major repair of buildings, all appurtenant structures, utilities, site development, and recreational trails. Vertical infrastructure does not include routine, recurring maintenance or operational expenses or leasing of a building, appurtenant structure, or utility without a lease-purchase agreement.